

Making the Connections: Reducing Teen Pregnancy Risk by Promoting Healthy Relationships webinar

August 1, 2013

MS. JAE'MIE HUGHES: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Jae'Mie Hughes and I'd like to welcome all of you to the "Making the Connections: Reducing Teen Pregnancy Risk by Promoting Healthy Relationships Webinar." Before we begin the presentation, I'd like to review a few administrative items and let you know how you can participate in today's Web event.

All the participants should be able to hear the audio and view the presentation slides. You may participate in today's webinar by accessing the microphone and speaker functions of your computer if that's enabled, or by using the toll-free option. This information may be found in the Go To Webinar interface in the control panel on the right side of your computer screen.

I'd like for everyone to please turn your attention to the Go To Webinar attendees interface, which is made up of two parts. That's the viewer window on the left, which allows you to see everything the presenter will share on your screen, and the control panel on the right.

Within the control panel is how you can participate in today's Web event. By clicking the orange arrow that is found in the top right corner of your screen, you can open and close your control panel. If you keep the control panel open or visible through the view menu, please ensure that the auto hide control panel option is not selected.

Questions may be typed in the question box at any time during the webinar presentation. Simply type in your question and click send. I see that some people have already begun to use the question and answer function, which is wonderful. If you have any other additional questions during the webinar, please feel free to utilize that option.

This will be an interactive webinar and there will be polls and a question and answer phase during the presentation. You may also utilize the raise your hand feature during the presentation. You simply click on the raised hand icon that is found next to your attendee name. And when questions are answered, the presenter will then unmute your line so that you may participate audibly.

We don't anticipate any issues with today's events. But if for any reason, technical difficulties arise and audio or screen views are lost, please attempt to dial in and log back into the webinar through the original webinar invite that you received. And if access is still unable to be regained, please check your email inbox for updates regarding rescheduling of this webinar event.

We will now begin the webinar presentation, and thank you for attending today's webinar.

MS. ERIN CLARK: Good afternoon. Welcome to today's webinar, "Making the Connections: Reducing Teen Pregnancy Risk by Promoting Healthy Relationships." Thank you for joining us to discuss this important topic.

My name is Erin Clark. I'm the program specialist with Break the Cycle's Training and Technical Assistance Program. Break the Cycle is an organization in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles devoted to preventing and responding to dating abuse and working with both adults and young people.

Specifically, our TA program provides Office on Violence Against Women DOJ technical assistance to domestic and sexual violence service providers. My co-presenter is Virginia Duplessis, a program manager with Futures Without Violence. Virginia and I will be speaking about the intersections of adolescent relationship abuse and teen pregnancy and provide you with the tools to incorporate these materials into your own work.

Upon conclusion of this webinar, participants will be able to describe the dynamics of adolescent relationship abuse, identify the links between teen pregnancy and adolescent relationship abuse, and list options for addressing adolescent relationship abuse in the context of existing pregnancy prevention programs or curricula.

It is important to note that the material in this webinar is of an introductory nature. In a recent survey, grantees reported interest in receiving training about the topics we will discuss today. This will help everyone get on the same page. It will also lay the foundation for a toolkit of resources that we are working on to help grantees address adolescent relationship abuse in their projects. A second webinar will be presented in September that delves more deeply into selected topics.

We will begin with our first objective to describe the dynamics of adolescent relationship abuse. This section will address what adolescent relationship abuse looks like and how it plays a role in the lives of young people.

As promised, let's start with a poll. There will be a number of polls throughout the webinar today and we encourage you to participate and provide your feedback. It is important for us

to know what you think and have your involvement in this training. A version of the question was asked in the needs assessment. So it may look familiar to some of you.

How do you refer to our topic today? Feel free to check all that apply or type other terms into the chat.

Great. Okay. So I'm seeing that (d) the healthy/unhealthy relationships have almost 80 percent. You'll be able to see these in a minute. Then dating abuse and intimate partner violence are close behind. Some other terms is also there. So I'm interested to learn what people use for that. As well as adolescent relationship abuse has about 41 percent.

Great. Thank you for your responses. As noted by the poll, there are many terms for the issues we are discussing. And many of you may use different words. They're all close in meaning, but with different nuances and connotations, and different organizations and fields may use different terms.

We will not choose one right term today, but want participants to be aware of the different ways the topic can be discussed. I'll be using the terms Break the Cycle is most comfortable with, which are dating abuse and dating violence. But you may note that my co-presenter Virginia will refer to adolescent relationship abuse or ARA.

At Break the Cycle, partly because of these variations, we like to start by parsing out our definitions. We define dating abuse as a pattern of abusive behaviors used to exert power and control over a dating partner. If you are familiar with domestic violence work, you may

notice that this definition does not vary from how we would define domestic violence that adults experience.

And the following slides will emphasize the differences and similarities between relationship abuse for young people and adults.

Let's break it down and start with "a pattern." Abuse often happens in a pattern, as a series of incidents or actions. And this does not mean that the first instance is not abuse or that every relationship will follow the same pattern. Many of you may be thinking of a cycle. This is one example, the one that was commonly used for a long time. But there are many different ways to describe what an abusive relationship looks like, such as a spectrum or peaks and valleys.

Each relationship should be valued on its own and it will not follow a formula. Young people may not recognize a pattern of abuse because they do not have sense of relationship experience or experience with healthy relationships. We have found that the idea of a pattern resonates more with them than a cycle for their understanding of relationships and behavior.

All abusive behaviors can refer to a wide range of behaviors. Physical violence is often considered abusive, but it is important to include sexual and emotional or verbal abuse in your conversations about abuse with young people, the definitions you can see up here. Physical behavior does not only include hitting and kicking, but something like sitting or blocking someone's face, so controlling their physical presence in any way.

Emotional and verbal abuse includes yelling and putdowns as well as words that can be said online or through text. And we'll be talking a bit about technologies later in this presentation, either by spreading rumors or between partners. Lastly, sexual abuse includes rape as well as reproductive coercion which we'll discuss in the next slide and Virginia will cover in depth.

One consistent theme out of all these behaviors is that the perpetrator is exercising control and power over the victim. This can happen in many different ways and many different settings, in person or via technology. For young people, abuse that not specifically physical maybe not be understood as abusive behavior. It might be called drama or feel like a social norm. So it's important to emphasize that abuse can take many forms.

In the context of pregnancy prevention, it is important to specifically call out another type of behavior that we call reproductive coercion. Reproductive coercion is a relatively new concept in the field. You may or may not be familiar with it. Simply defined, it is when a partner is trying to get a woman pregnant against her will or control the outcomes of a pregnancy through threat, intimidation or by tampering with contraceptive methods. Virginia will discuss this concept in more detail later on, but suffice it to say that these abusive behaviors directly impact pregnancy and sexual health.

The purpose of the behaviors we just discussed is to exert power and control in a relationship. The methods of exerting power and control may look different between young people and adults. But power and control is always at the core. This is an image of a teen power and control wheel developed by loveisrespect.org, adapted from the original Power and Control Wheel created by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project. The goal of the

wheel is to show examples of how abusive behaviors can be used to exert power and control.

So here we have an example of using social status, which is particularly resonates with young people in a high school or middle school setting. Each point in the wheel is a different example that is specific to youth experiences of abuse and this has the feedback of our youth advisory board. The interactive wheel is available at www.loveisrespect.org.

For young people in a relationship, the behavior may not feel specifically about power and control. For example, jealousy may be motivated by fear or verbal abuse by re-enacting trauma or isolation they've experienced in their own lives. But regardless of the intentions, power and control remains at the core of these behaviors, even when they are connected to other feelings or experiences. This is important to help young people understand when they are working through their own relationships and trying to figure out what is abusive and what is unhealthy.

"Over a dating partner" can be the most contentious and confusing part of this definition in working with young people because dating can look like so many different things. In your work, you're probably very familiar with the challenge. Hanging out, talking to, hooking up and many other terms can be used to define or not define a partnership. And co-parenting may complicate this further.

Using teen's language back at them and working with the different definitions that they choose is really important. Their relationships may be gay, straight or queer, monogamous or non-monogamous, public or not and sexual or non-sexual. As you're all most likely very

familiar, keep an open mind when talking to young people and defining their romantic partnerships. Abusive behavior is abusive regardless of the definition of the relationship.

When we talk about dating abuse, it is important to consider prevalence and the fact that it impacts the lives of many young people. For example, one in three teen girls experience some kind of abuse in their romantic relationships, including verbal and emotional abuse.

The National Youth Risk Behavior survey has found that nearly 1 in 10 middle and high school students of all genders have experienced some type of physical violence in a relationship. And while we know young men experience abuse, young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest per capita rates of dating violence.

Think about this in the young people that you work with and the numbers that you need to be reaching out with. It's definitely prevalent and definitely impacts the young people that you work with every day.

Dating abuse also impacts some communities disproportionately. American Indian and Alaska Native students experience physical violence in their relationships at rates as high as 16.3 percent. And black and Hispanic students at above average rates of 12.2 percent and 11.4 percent respectively.

Additionally, lesbian and gay students were nearly three times as likely to report abuse victimization as their heterosexual peers. Again, these numbers only report the physical violence. Less is known about the prevalence of emotional, verbal and sexual abuse among these communities. They also rely on teen's self-identifying abusive behaviors and feeling

comfortable reporting those circumstances. So it's important to keep in mind when working with these communities.

Schools can be both the safest and most dangerous place for young people involved in an abusive relationship. Physical and sexual victimization are associated with an increased risk for school dropout, lower grades, and less connectedness to the school. Additionally, dating abuse can overlap significantly with other forms of violence. Both victims and perpetrators are more likely to carry weapons, as well as engage in physical fighting and other high-risk behaviors. Sadly, a third of female homicides, ages 11 to 18, are committed by an intimate partner. So violence in a dating relationship is not isolated from other kinds of youth violence.

Looking at the risk factors from a different angle, the relationship between gender and violence is complex. The different socialized roles and behaviors of males and females, children as well as adults, are shaped and reinforced by gender norms in society. Gender norms are societal expectations that define appropriate behavior for women and men.

For example, in some societies, being male is associated with taking risk, being tough and aggressive and having multiple sex partners. Research shows that young men who believe in gender equality are less likely to be violent toward their female partners. And young women who believe in gender equality are less likely to be involved with male partners who are violent.

School-based interventions that aim to change attitudes before gender stereotypes become deeply ingrained can be really effective at reducing relationship abuse. This is important to keep in mind in prevention work, in individual conversations with young people about their

role in romantic relationships and those opportunities, and even in screening or looking for warning signs of a young person's involvement in an abusive relationship.

Not only do violence and gender expectations play a role in a young person's dating relationship, but so do many other factors. From our work with young people, we've highlighted five key relationship influences: peer group, a lack of resources, a distrust of authority, their limited life experience and the prevalence of technology. You most likely already see this in your work, but we're going to talk about how this impacts their dating relationships.

These factors influence all relationships, healthy or unhealthy. So it's important to consider how these factors affect the young person in an abusive or unhealthy relationship and how to counter those factors as well.

Peer groups may establish unhealthy social norms, including the pressure to date, have sex, or fall into certain gender roles or communication patterns with a partner. Peers may also consider things like play fighting or name calling or manipulating contraceptive choices as the norm and what all relationships should look like or do look like in their world.

These tie into limited life experience. They may not have positive relationship models in their lives or in the media that model what healthy communication can and should look like. If they have not been in a relationship before, the newness of love and intimacy can overshadow that they may not know *themselves* in a relationship and how to build respect and talk to the partner. So they haven't gone through this experience before, it's new and exciting, but they don't really know what choices to make and where to go with that.

Young people may also lack access to certain resources because of their age.

Transportation, income, schedule flexibility because of schooling, so transportation as well. And the option to change housing and work often cannot apply to them. Shelters are not as prevalent for them to find another place to live while still going to school.

The distrust of authority indicates young people are more likely to turn to a friend than to an adult and may be unlikely to listen to the unsolicited advice of adults around healthy relationships.

Technology in particular, as promised, we can talk about this for a long time. I'm sure all of you have experience with this. But it impacts the way a young person can build a relationship and interact with each other. Middle and high school students today have grown up with constant communication as the norm, and texting and Facebook and other social media platforms are essential to their lives. Think about how differently your friendships and relationships in middle school, for example, may have looked if you had your own cell phone, how communication might have been different, making friends might have been different, and how keeping friends might have been different.

Technology and relationships go hand-in-hand. One study broke down teens use of technology into the following—and this follows the spectrum from healthy to unhealthy and to abusive—starting with starting a relationship, healthy communication, then arguing, monitoring a partner or trying to control their behavior, emotional aggression towards a partner, seeking help during a violent episode, distancing a partner's access, and

re-establishing contact after a violent episode. And this isn't just necessarily texting. It's the other social media platforms as well.

As you can see, these behaviors run the gamut from healthy to unhealthy to abusive. But it's not the technology that is dangerous, but teens' use of it as a tool for power and control. It is also helpful to kind of get thinking about how this might impact the relationship. The thing about technology may alter certain healthy behaviors. For example, how might starting relationship look different with the aid of texting or a Facebook special status. How might that impact how relationships are created and maintained for young people that you work with?

Let's pause again for a short poll. Some of you have teens in your lives in many different ways and probably witness their use of technology, maybe at all hours, and your own use of technology as well every day. In your estimation, what is the median number of texts sent on a typical day by teens?

Okay. About 62 percent of you guessed over 80. And then hovering around 30 percent is 60, and then less for 40 and less for under 30. So the answer to this is actually (c) 60, which is interesting.

So if you divide that by maybe a young person is awake ten hours a day or kind of has access to a phone ten hours a day, because oftentimes they can't have it at school or in the classroom. That's maybe six an hour. That's a lot. It's a lot of interaction that's going on. They're spending a lot of time talking to other people and kind of building their relationships around that.

It may not seem like a lot to all of us. I don't want to assume that 62 is a lot because a lot of you guessed (e). Because sending that many texts does not necessarily mean that that is an abusive relationship. That doesn't necessarily mean that things are unhealthy, but it does mean that they're communicating often and consistently throughout the day. It's the nature of the text—whether they're wanted or wanted—that is really important.

As we talked about a little bit earlier, texting can be used to monitor a partner or perpetrate verbal or emotional abuse. In other words, as a *tool* for power and control.

In fact, many young people experience some form of dating abuse via technology. Which is why we spend quite a bit of time on this. Because this data is from the technology and dating abuse survey of teens ages 13 to 18 and provides some examples of what we saw earlier, including monitoring, sexual harassment abuse, verbal abuse and spreading rumors.

And though the topics may seem unrelated, thinking about how technology and dating abuse are connected is very applicable to understanding reproductive coercion as well and how sex and dating abuse are related. Technology is integral to the lives and relationships of young people. It's a part of how they build relationships and reach out to each other. Just as decisions about sex and sexuality can be very integral to even their friendships and relationships and family life.

Okay. My co-presenter Virginia from Futures Without Violence will take over from here.

Virginia.

MS. VIRGINIA DUPLESSIS: Thank you so much, Erin, for giving us this great context about teen dating violence or adolescent relationship abuse. As Erin mentioned, we use different terms.

But I think it's really important to have that context of prevalence and definitions so that we can begin to talk about this link between teen pregnancy and adolescent relationship abuse.

So again, my name is Virginia Duplessis. I work at Futures Without Violence. And for over 30 years, we have been working to create and implement education programs, national policies, professional training programs and public actions designed to end violence against women, children and families around the world.

One of our really important pieces of work was helping to develop the Violence Against Women Act. So we're really always striving to reach new audiences and really transform social norms. We do a lot of trainings of professionals, different kinds of professionals like doctors, nurses, coaches and judges on improving responses to violence and abuse.

So I have the pleasure of working with a lot of different folks who are working on this issue. And I think on a human level, it's important obviously because we want everyone to live free from violence and abuse. Just as a person, you want that for everyone else. But on a professional level, really taking a look at how experiencing violence affects our program goals. So as folks that work with teen pregnancy prevention, how is this specifically linked to your programs?

So we're going to spend a little bit of time today just talking about this link between teen pregnancy and adolescent relationship abuse. So for many providers, the link between adolescent relationship abuse and teen pregnancy isn't immediately apparent or obvious, but we have a lot of data to tell us that they are intimately connected. We know that adolescent girls in physically abusive relationships were 3.5 times more likely to become pregnant than

girls who were not abused. We know that pregnant adolescents were two to three times more likely to have experienced violence during and after pregnancy than older pregnant women.

And we also know that over half of American Indian teen mothers report being abused; and that over a third of them report abuse during pregnancy.

So you find yourself in a really hard and tricky situation where if you're in an abusive relationship as an adolescent, you're more likely to become pregnant. And once you are pregnancy, you're also more likely to experience abuse.

So for someone then experiencing relationship abuse, sexual risk is also increased. Which obviously, if you have increased sexual risk, that's going to contribute to your risk for pregnancy. We know that partner violence among teen girls is linked to early sexual intercourse—so, sex before the age of 15. We know that it's linked to inconsistent condom use or non-use of condoms at last sex. We know it's linked to having three or more sexual partners in past three months. It's also linked to using alcohol or other drugs before sex. We see a link to having a past or current STI and also having a partner with known HIV risk factors.

So this list is a lot to take in. And these are all risk factors that we're trying to reduce in our teen pregnancy programs and our other adolescent health programs.

Now, for our tribal grantees who are on the line, it's important to note that there is national data documenting high levels of some of these sexual risk factors among urban American

Indian young women and urban Alaska Native youth, along with high rates of non-voluntary sex and sexual assault.

So when you're talking to youth, when you're talking to your clients about these kinds of risk factors, it's really important to just have that context and understand that adolescent relationship abuse might be an issue that they are dealing with and experiencing.

So one strategy that we talk a lot about in teen pregnancy prevention programs, and I actually worked at a teen pregnancy prevention program many years ago, is condom use. That's one of our go-to strategies when we're doing health education. But we know that girls who experience physical dating violence were almost three times more likely to fear the perceived consequences of negotiating condom use than girls who were not abused. So that statistic is a real mouthful there. But it gives you pause and really reminds you that it's important to look at the context of dating violence. There are young women who are in unhealthy, abusive, violent relationships. They're afraid to talk to their partners about condom use.

So if you put yourself in the shoes of a young woman who is in an abusive relationship, thinking about using condoms, weighing your risks, it can feel like the risk of getting pregnant or contracting an STI, you're weighing that against the risk of further abuse. So condom use may not be a conversation that feels safe.

This is a quote from some qualitative work that was done specifically with young women who were seeking family planning services, those in family planning clinics and school-based

health centers. And I think it really again gives you the story behind all these numbers and statistics that we're presenting. So I'm just going to read the quote.

"Like the first couple of times, the condom seems to break every time. You know what I mean, and it was just kind of funny, like, the first six times the condom broke. Six condoms, that's kind of rare. I could understand one but six times, and then after that when I got on the birth control, he was just like always saying, like you should have my baby, you should have my daughter, you should have my kid."

And this was really a common story that we heard. This was a 17-year-old female who shared this experience with us. This wasn't some out-of-left field, this never happens, but over and over again hearing similar stories of male partners manipulating condom use and trying to get them pregnant when they didn't want to be.

So you're taking a look at behavior that is subtle and it's not what most teens or even what most adults would really think about when they are defining dating violence or adolescent relationship abuse.

I use this quote a lot when I'm doing presentations and trainings and I ask folks in the room what do you think? Did the condom really break those six times? And certainly most heads in the room shake, they're saying no. And really seeing the red flag for this is the end of the quote where after she got on birth control, the partner is still saying you should have my baby. You should have my kid. So it's pretty clear that it wasn't a case of condom failure. It's not something where we have the two folks come into the room and do some more

education about condom use that the condoms are going to start working more effectively. Clearly, the partner has some intention of getting a young woman pregnant.

So I'm actually going to pause right here to do a little check to see how the volume and the speed is going for people. So I'm just going to wait about twenty seconds. And Jae'mie, if you could, let me know if there's feedback from the audience around the speed and the volume.

MS. JAE'MIE HUGHES: Sure. It looks like from the responses that are coming in just really quickly, it seems to be looks good, sounds great.

MS. VIRGINIA DUPLESSIS: Okay, great.

MS. JAE'MIE HUGHES: Your volume and speed is just right.

MS. VIRGINIA DUPLESSIS: Okay, good. So taking a look again at some studies around reproductive coercion, talking to young women about their experiences, we know that about a quarter of abused adolescent females reported that their male partners were trying to get them pregnant when they didn't want to be. So earlier Erin defined the concept of reproductive coercion, when a partner is trying to get a woman pregnant against her will or control the outcomes of pregnancy through duress and intimidation or by tampering with contraception. And we know that it's common and it might explain why many women are not using birth control or use it inconsistently.

So this is a slide, this is a statistic again, that I use a lot. And oftentimes, providers are pretty surprised to hear this really high number of young men who are promoting pregnancy.

Taking a look specifically at that concept again, at teen birth control sabotage, we know there was one study of teen moms who are on public assistance who had also experienced recent intimate partner violence that two-thirds of them had experienced birth control sabotage by a dating partner. So we know in many of our programs, one of our program goals is to help reduce the rate of rapid repeat pregnancies. So you have young women who are already mothers and we're supporting them and making plans and putting things into place so that they don't become pregnant quickly again. And they have partners who are sabotaging that. So again, I think this really speaks to the importance of addressing this issue in all of our programs.

Now, if you take a look at the data around emergency contraception and experiencing violence in a relationship, we know that abused women are more likely to have used emergency contraception when compared to non-abused women. So if you think back to the previous slide about how birth control sabotage condoms are allegedly breaking, in those situations, emergency contraception is really going to be your only option. Because when you are trying to contracept, you know taking birth control pills or using other forms, condoms and your partner's not letting you, it's going to be after the unprotected sex has occurred that maybe you're able to go to the clinic and get emergency contraception.

So we're going to be wrapping up this section. But I just want to reiterate, you know when we're talking about relationships, whether you're talking about abstinence or negotiation skills or communication skills, it's really important to understand that there will probably be

someone in your group who is or has been the victim or the perpetrator of relationship or sexual abuse. When you take a look at the prevalence numbers, it's not likely that no one in your class has had this experience.

So when you talk, you don't want to assume that everyone has a choice about whether or when to engage in sexual activity. So, for example, we have lots of sex education curricula that include lessons about communication skills or negotiation skills. But we know for some young women there's no negotiation that can happen, and it's not about effective communication when you're in a relationship with a partner who is abusive or controlling.

So we really have seen that most curricula don't include examples or provide material enabling teachers or facilitators to talk about, you know, when that negotiation is impossible. So if you're in an abusive or controlling relationship, these conversations on negotiation, you just can't relate to. It's not your reality.

A lot of these curriculums don't even mention teen dating violence or resources for the students who are victims or who have perpetrated. So one of the things we really hope to have grantees do is look for those opportunities to incorporate information throughout your program and to weave these contexts of healthy and safe relationships into really, you know, throughout your program and not just having it as a standalone session.

And in addition, many people assume that teens are not using contraceptives because they don't have information about contraceptive options and they're worried about side effects. And I can say, as someone who comes from a health education background, working with

adolescents that was certainly true for me. That's what I thought. And sometimes that is the case.

But as we talked about in this past section, for a large number of students, it's not really about side effects and efficacy. For some, condoms can't be negotiated. So it really doesn't matter how effective they are, condoms are just completely off the table. So when we're talking to teens about contraceptive options, it's really important to talk about methods that are more discreet and can be hidden from their partners.

Methods like IUDs, intrauterine devices, implants and ingestibles. And there are a lot of resources to help you get more information about those kinds of discreet contraceptive methods. And because there are really high rates of unprotected sex, having those discussions about emergency contraception is also important. As I mentioned, for some young women, that is going to be really their best harm reduction strategy.

So now I'm going to turn the presentation back over to Erin. Unless we have any questions or thoughts before I move on.

MS. ERIN CLARK: Great. Thank you, Virginia. I did want to address a couple of questions that I know were asked a little while ago. So I apologize. Well, back to Virginia, one of the questions that was asked was how was adolescent being defined? And it was asked during your part. So I want to give you a chance to respond. I know for some of the stats that I was talking about, it can be defined differently. So if we're talking about the stats, some of them were 13 to 18. A couple of them were 11, I think, to 19. Break the Cycle works with young people is the word that we use typically. And that is now under the new VAWA law 11

through 24, I believe. It used to be 12 to 24. As our audience. Virginia, do you want to take a second to answer that as well?

MS. VIRGINIA DUPLESSIS: Sure. So at Futures, we definitely follow the leads of our colleagues that work in adolescent health and brain development and define it as ages 10 to 24. Of course, this age range is a little bit of a moving target. So, for some of the studies, it's a smaller window. And at the end of the webinar, we'll actually, if you are interested in looking at the studies and the statistics, we'll give you a list of all of the studies and articles that are being referenced. And you can see specifically there. I do know for the family planning studies that I cited by Dr. Elizabeth Miller, it really was ages 16 – the bulk of the respondents were ages 16 to 24.

MS. ERIN CLARK: Okay, great. Another question was about disability, young people with disabilities. Unfortunately, this is something that there is so little resources and research out there about. The couple of things that I would say that I do know from what Break the Cycle has looked into is that it's really important to acknowledge that their relationships exist and that they are interested.

This is feedback we've gotten from people in the field who have done work with young people with disabilities, that there is a need for these kind of programs educating them about healthy relationships, and that is kind of step one. And also to work in kind of some awareness that peer pressure may be different. So those are the two comments I have on that. If anyone has anything else to share, I would love to hear it. Because that is definitely part of the field that needs to grow.

Great. Okay. I'm going to have to run through those questions a little bit later. I think Virginia's going to be there. And I'm going to get started on this section. Thank you for all of your input and participation. So in this section, I'm going to focus on the what, where and how of incorporating adolescent relationship abuse and dating abuse into your projects. Please note there's no right way or one way and many of you already have experience doing this. So I hope participants will chime in with what lessons learned and best practices that you've come across in the field.

Here we are. Addressing adolescent relationship abuse in the context of existing pregnancy prevention programs or curricula. So let's start again with the discussion questions. For those of you on the webinar, what is the biggest obstacle to addressing adolescent dating abuse in your project? Please enter your comments into the chat field. I see time, OK, yeah time. Not a part of our project. Yes, things like that do become a problem, being able to fit it in. We're doing it. That's a great answer. I love that. Thank you.

Okay. Thank you for all of your input. We appreciate it. So you already responded to this answer at one point probably if you filled out the needs assessment survey. Some of the results of that: 45 percent of survey respondents say they do not have enough time to address this topic. So that's what you all also said in some of the chat responses, that time is a big challenge. 28 percent said they do not have enough funding. 17 percent said project staff do not have adequate training. And 14 percent said their project lacked appropriate material. Thank you for all of your responses. They were great. We hope we have dispelled the notion that the issue is not relevant to your students. As noted, there will be people in your project who've experienced or perpetrated relationship or sexual abuse.

If a lack of resources is a problem, let me make a plug for requesting TA through your project officer. In addition, we will be putting together a toolkit full of resources and ideas that will be available in the fall.

Many people believe that they don't have enough time to cover these issues. In the next couple of slides, we will outline what can be included and then where and how it can be included. That will hopefully help you work around that challenge.

Covering healthy relationships can be a huge topic, right? But these are the elements we think are vital. First, distinguish between healthy and unhealthy relationship, behavior including power and control by intimate partners. This can essentially be what we talked about earlier in this webinar. The tools I referenced from Loveisrespect.org can be a great place to start.

Always encourage safe and respectful relationships. This includes your own interpersonal relationships, guidance, the safe space that you create, and support of their own interpersonal relationships or interactions with staff. Including information about how to help a friend can also be incredibly powerful. Many young people may speak to a friend about their abusive relationships first. So equipping young people with the skills to respond proactively can have wide-reaching impact. This element also serves a dual purpose of educating survivors and perpetrators in a safer more open environment. They may feel more comfortable participating in prevention materials or the activities because it is about them helping a friend becoming involved in the prevention work.

Next, educate sexually active adolescents about sexual coercion and the importance of consent. So as we talked about a little bit, teaching young people to respect their sexuality, boundaries and sexual agency can empower them to make their own decision sexually and prepare them to recognize sexual coercion in their own relationships.

By practicing relationship skills, particularly negotiating the use of contraception, young people are given the tools to advocate for their own healthy relationships.

And as noted earlier, gender norms profoundly affect young people's ability to make and implement decisions regarding their sexual lives. So take the time to challenge them. When you see gender norms or certain gender expectations in place, challenge them.

Trauma may also impact a young person's ability to absorb prevention messages. They may feel triggered by the topic and respond with anxiety, anger or disengage.

Supporting a safe place where young people can access information on their own time, such as online or in private on their own terms, can be valuable to communicating with them.

Finally, an important element in adding dating abuse to any education is also providing a safe place for audience members to seek advice and assistance for relationship abuse, in privacy and with confidentiality, if possible.

So that's a lot to cover and we talked about how time is a big challenge. So that may seem a little bit contradictory. But there are already many places in your curricula or prevention work where healthy relationships may be a really good fit. We're going to talk about that next.

So where to address dating abuse. I'll let you look at these first. Communication skills, boundary setting, negotiations, peer pressure, contraceptive options, alcohol and other drugs. There's a good possibility that the work you do or the work your organization does touches on a lot of these things. These subjects are commonly found in sex education curricula. Each of these subjects provide an opportunity to incorporate information about healthy relationships.

For example, discussions of contraceptive options should include information about reproductive coercion and pregnancy pressure. For example, what forms may be more private. And how such behavior can impact the choice of contraceptive methods.

Skills building such as refusal and negotiating skills can include examples and scenarios of a continuum of behavior from healthy to unhealthy to abusive. In conversations about peer pressure, information can be included not only about peer pressure in friendships and other peer groups, but in romantic relationships and the unique challenges that these may represent.

Healthy relationship messaging, which has been shown to resonate better with young people in speaking directly about unhealthy relationships, as I saw a couple of you said in the comments box, is a flexible and very relevant topic that can be included in most behavioral education materials. It may not be a lot. You may not be able to cover it for a long period of time, but oftentimes it can fit in, at least in a small way in the work that you're already doing.

Take stock of what your program or curricula currently includes and be creative as needed.

Ideally, some of the subjects should be included as separate standalone modules, right? Like the elements of healthy/unhealthy relationships. And I know some of you are doing that work and it's really exciting. But information may also be incorporated as vignettes in the examples you're using in other training materials, other creative aspects or research assignments.

Artistic programs that are peer-led as well as vignettes that reflect the local community can be very sustainable and flexible in delivering positive healthy relationship messages by and for young people. So artistic things like writing vignettes, doing musical lyrics or analyzing musical lyrics or creating their own plays and things like that, can both have student involvement in prevention and provide education as well.

The next two slides will address the how of individual and organizational steps to better respond to and include prevention of dating abuse in your pregnancy prevention work.

A significant capacity-building element is encouraging a teen-friendly atmosphere. You should already be familiar with this and probably are. But an environment that encourages disclosure may look a little bit different. So, for example, thinking about privacy and healthy relationship messaging in your space may be one way.

Next, training might be the best thing that you can do for yourself and your organization because it will not only improve your confidence about addressing these issues, but will address concerns before you start to implement. And remember, even though you may have had training in the past there may be new concepts, like reproductive coercion that Virginia

talked about, as well as staff changes and turnover. Creating a comprehensive and teen friendly referral list is also very valuable to empowering young survivors with options and resources.

Meeting ACF requirements for GLBT protections and inclusiveness can also be very important to not alienate a community of young people as we spoke about earlier who may be particularly vulnerable to violence and social isolation.

Also, it is important to keep in mind that tribes and tribal governments may have certain referral or confidentiality requirements that should be followed if you work with them.

So your organization may already do this. Remember to be responsive to the transportation and scheduling needs of teens as much as possible.

Allowing them to bring a friend or email you can help bring trust and accessibility for survivors.

So less than 25 percent of adolescent pregnancy prevention grantees who answered the needs assessment have written policies or procedures for handling disclosures of adolescent relationship abuse.

These policies should address internal hierarchies, external partners, such as how to make referrals and when to disclose to parents, and the requirements of state and local entities.

Some questions to guide you can include: Do the policies include information on mandated reports of child abuse? And this is a big one. And this will vary state to state and you may already know that you're a mandated reporter in your role. But it is important to know and understand that for your own state and particular role. For your reference, there is a mandatory reporting webinar available on the Communities of Practice website for grantees.

Next, did I identify a reporter? Do these policies specifically say who the reporter is? And what types of abuse qualify as abuse? Are protocols articulated for making a report, for how you do it? For example, informing supervisors, completing the paperwork within 24 hours, or filing it in a certain location. Do they articulate other response protocols such as when a parent or guardian can or should or needs to be contacted, or when they don't? How to disclose information to a referral, so if you are doing a supported referral, what kind of information should you include in that and how? And what information to convey to a supervisor.

Documentation on these cases also can be really important. So having paperwork and forms ready. Knowing what the policies are and kind of having that procedure down cold can be really important to responding when a disclosure does take place and action is required.

Do they overlap with organizational steps for preparedness? But it is equally important to take individual steps to better respond, intervene and prevent dating abuse. This sometimes allows you to be a little bit more proactive than you might be able to be within a larger organization.

We have broken it down into the following two categories. First, know the teen's options. Second, know the words to use. And third, know your preconceptions. So know kind of where you're coming from.

Some organizations may not have the support or resources for general staff training, but as an individual you may have the flexibility to seek out personal training and even just the resources that we talked about today or coming to this webinar, to educate yourself and your colleagues on a smaller scale.

Education like this can also support an open and thoughtful environment among colleagues and encourage that kind of open conversation about what dating abuse is and the warning signs that people are seeing amongst colleagues so you can evaluate and impact the young people that you work with, kind of trickle down in that way and kind of create a stronger, healthier environment.

Developing partners with local dating and sexual abuse providers can facilitate supported referrals. So if you have that network already in place. Cross-training can be a great way to share information and resources. And joint projects that can synergize your agencies and skillsets.

Supported referrals can be particularly valuable with young people who may not be comfortable trusting adults or in a therapeutic environment. So if you have already built that trust with that young person, and perhaps it needs to be handed off to someone who is an advocate, maybe a legal person--knowing that person and having you say that this person is great can be really helpful in having that young person follow through and feel comfortable in

the process and that they are really kind of doing what is best for them because they've worked to build trust with you as well.

In the interest of building trust, it is also important to understand limitations to confidentiality that may apply. Even if some behaviors do not fall under mandatory reporting laws, because it varies widely between states, knowing the words of how to explain your role and the limits up front when you begin a conversation with a young person so that they know is really important. And be prepared to utilize those words with the young people you work. So figuring out how to best explain your role and what you must report can be really important to building that trust. It may be a challenging hurdle to some people depending on the role that you take in the agency and with that young person, but it can be really important to build a respectful relationship and that it's built on trust with them.

So as individuals, we all come to this with our own experiences and exposure to dating abuse and pregnancy prevention. Make sure your own personal experiences, as you probably already do in your job, for example, your experience with violence and abuse, as well as the biases such as gender stereotypes, do not get in the way of providing appropriate messages and support for teens.

Keep in mind that some teens will be comfortable talking about relationship violence and others may not. Be aware of the important role that culture plays in adjusting dating abuse because some students may come from backgrounds or families or experiences where dating in itself is frowned upon. And that makes it more difficult to address this issue.

Creating a safe environment means including space for young people to learn and access information on their own or in private. So resources we can direct them to--websites, hotlines, that sort of thing. Because you all work in very different environments, how do your program delivery staff create a safe environment? So because all of you have very different spaces that you work with, very different demographics, environments, how do *you* create that safe environment for discussion and disclosure? If you could please enter your response into the chat to share your ideas with others, we would very much appreciate it.

Great, thank you. And someone asked the question please repeat the website for the video on mandated reporting. It's actually a webinar. And I can get that to you at the end. Oh, it's at the Communities of Practice website for grantees--there should be a webinar on there that is about mandatory reporting. That should help you figure out a little bit the direction that you can go in your role. Great. Setting values, agreeing on norms, that's great. Thank you.

So as we've addressed, young people may not want or feel comfortable reporting their experiences of dating abuse to an authority figure. We spoke about distrust of authority as a key relationship influence early in the presentation, but it may also impact how they react if they find themselves in an unsafe situation. So they are in that relationship and they need to speak with someone.

This is a list of obstacles we know many young people face as they consider reporting abusive behavior. Some important ones to note are the fear of retaliation, such as violence or isolation by their peers or abusers' friends or fear of what their own friends might do. Distrust of the police, particularly in certain communities. And pregnancy or parenting. As we discussed, pregnancy's an added element of power and control in abusive relationships

because the stress of pregnancy and parenting, as well as the stigma and fear of isolation may prevent a young parent from reporting abuse. These obstacles are important to know and understand in order to support the safe disclosure for the young people you work with.

Remember the principles of the empowerment model. Survivors will know how to assess their own safety. They've been in this relationship. They've seen the patterns and they probably recognize them. So they will know how to assess their own safety and the consequences of reporting in a certain context.

So trust them to seek help when the time is right for them. Maybe you know someone that might be interested in talking to you, but the time isn't right. And sometimes you have to kind of wait for that and wait for the moment to be right, for them to be safe and to come and speak to you.

Disclosure by young people may also not always be simple. It can be like being handed a piece of the puzzle, but the task is working with them to put together the larger picture.

Teens who are unsure may also test you. You are probably already familiar with this in other areas where you've worked. By just simply telling you a story about abusive behavior their or a friend are experiencing to gage your reaction, to see if you think that's abusive because maybe they're not really sure where to go with that.

This is where knowing yourself and the words, as we discussed earlier, can be very valuable. If something sounds abusive, it is typically best to treat that information as a disclosure. And

remember, disclosures may also be by the perpetrator of abusive behaviors. So be prepared to respond to that situation as well.

This slide includes a few things that can be helpful in the moment. Some of it may sound strange to look at now, but kind of reading it and keeping them in your mind in that moment of crisis or not really sure how to respond, this can be really helpful to be reassuring and empowering for a young person who has come to you in trust.

Here are some additional, more general tips for handling disclosures. These tips summarize many of the things we've already discussed today. I do want to point out the fourth bullet. Ask teens how they want to handle the situation. That again can be really important in the moment. You don't want to re-traumatize anyone. You want to kind of keep them in control of the situation.

So that can be a great way to start and work with them about how to ask for resources. What kind of resources do they want? What kind of options they are looking for. Because it can be easy to take an I'll handle it from here approach, but we know that empowerment, resources and education can go much further in the safety and healing of young survivors. Then kind of taking it out of their hands. And this can be hard with young people because there are things like mandated reporting. You may have to talk to their parents or things like that. But keeping the options that they can have in their control can be really empowering and important for someone to move forward.

Lastly, we boiled down four action steps to take with you as you leave the webinar. To summarize, develop a referral network, train staff, partner for cross-training with dating and

sexual abuse providers. I know we love to do cross-training. And always, prepare. So the slide would suggest the things to say for disclosures. That could be preparing. Just looking at that, 20 seconds. Or something bigger. Something about really formally including this in your sex education curriculum. That can also be preparing. So thinking about what you have in your capacity and moving forward.

Okay. So we have one final poll. What action steps will you take as a response to attending this webinar? Great. Thank you for your responses. Okay. It's a lot. I like seeing that there's a wide range of what people choose to do, or people plan to do multiple things. I think that is really important and we appreciate your enthusiasm. Visit Break the Cycle and/or Futures' website. We love that one. Identifying additional training opportunities. That's great. If you're seeking resources, feel free to contact either of us or your TA providers. Great. Thank you.

So that's been a lot of information. I know some of you have been entering questions into the box. I haven't been able to follow it. So maybe I can pass it back over to Virginia or Jae'mie who might be interested in fielding some of those questions. And feel free to ask more.

MS. VIRGINIA DUPLESSIS: This is Virginia and I did want to list a couple of the questions. I know some of the chat from the chat box were responding to questions. So I apologize if I missed yours. But a couple of questions were how to work with young men on this topic, specifically about young men who are doing the sabotaging of the birth control. Also, how to get additional resources on refusal skills for young people in relationships where they're being forced to have sex when they don't want to. And then a couple of people also bringing up really wanting to focus on aspects of healthy relationships rather than talking about the

negative of unhealthy relationships. So that was just a comment that I noticed a couple of times. Erin, do you have any feedback around working with young men?

MS. ERIN CLARK: I have some, but I actually think that our strength being the dating views, I'd be interested to see what anyone might have to say about the sex ed side of things of working with young men. And if anything is different. Because oftentimes, when we work with young men, we try to do groups of young people of all genders together and to talk about responsibility and bystander interventions. But I imagine that may not be how people working more in the sex ed curriculum tend to approach things.

MS. VIRGINIA DUPLESSIS: Yeah, if people want to type in their experiences that would be great. And in terms of talking about the work that we do at Futures Without Violence, we really encourage a very universal approach to talking about consensual sex and consensual contraception. So I think we have an opportunity to talk to young men in addition to young women about really concrete steps that they can take. A lot of the research that we talked about and we focused on is on the experiences of young women because that is where the field has gone. And I think increasingly there will be more attention to young men who are perpetrators of birth control sabotage and seeing what factors are at play there.

MS. JAE'MIE HUGHES: This is Jae'mie. I also wanted to interject for a second there were one or two people who had their hands raised and I wanted to see if we could unmute their lines and let them speak audibly for a second if they had any additional questions they wanted to ask. Hi, is Adrial available? I believe that you had a question. Your hand was raised. I wanted to see if you still had a question that you wanted to ask.

ADRIAL: No, thank you. It was answered.

MS. JAE'MIE HUGHES: Oh, great.

ADRIAL: Thank you.

MS. VIRGINIA DUPLESSIS: We do have a couple of comments around working with young men and the importance of acknowledging the gender roles that have been constructed and how young men are really under pressure to act a certain way and how as providers we have this opportunity to really do some transformative work and talk with young men honestly and openly about their experiences and their wants and their needs. So I think that's great. Giving them that opportunity to really speak freely.

And someone mentioned a resource, ANSWER at Rutgers, that has a class about boys and sex ed if folks are interested in taking a look at that. And really again, lifting up the importance of making sure that we are acknowledging that young men can be supportive and involved in birth control decisions if they're sexually active, which absolutely is true. You know, working in adolescent health settings, talking specifically about reproductive health, we were always encouraging and very happy when partners came in together to talk about contraception.

But again, I think we need to just take a look at the numbers around relationships of youth and this reality of reproductive coercion, birth control sabotage and have that context in our mind. And certainly giving young women an opportunity to talk alone with their providers,

with their counselors, with their health educators, to really make sure that the conversation about birth control is something that they can have safely and honestly.

MS. ERIN CLARK: Great. And to counter your point, Virginia, I would imagine from the dating abuse perspective, that also having those conversations with young men can be really valuable, when they come in for doctors' appointments and things like that and when you do have access to them, talking about what their contraceptive choices are. Just seeing some of the comments in the field makes me think that that may also be a great approach that some of you utilize as well. Yes, Jessica, I see your comments. Thank you.

MS. VIRGINIA DUPLESSIS: Oh, yes. Everyone. Everyone should have the opportunity to talk alone with their provider.

MS. JAE'MIE HUGHES: Absolutely. Well, if those are all the questions, I want to make sure. I don't want to be shutting down too early. But thank you everyone for your involvement. Go ahead.

MS. SARAH AXELSON: There have been some questions about how to access this webinar afterwards. And we will be both sending it around to the same folks that got the save the date information for this webinar and then it will also be available on the Communities of Practice website. And if you don't have access to that, the primary contact at your grantee organization should be able to grant you access.

MS. ERIN CLARK: Great. I see one person, Jeannine, has a question. If you'd like to type it in. Well, feel free to follow-up with any of us. The next two slides are citations. So when you have this, you can go through and if you want to learn anymore or see any of the research that was

cited, please feel free. Some of these are really interesting. There's a few reports on the technology. Thank you so much for listening today. We hope this has been a useful presentation of information. Please stay tuned for the next webinar on this topic scheduled for September, as well as a toolkit of materials that will be released. Thank you.

(END OF TRANSCRIPT)